

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00
COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03 INR-10 NSAE-00 SP-02 STR-07
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FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2897

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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USEEC

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EPAP, BC

SUBJECT: BOTSWANA BEEF DEVELOPMENTS

REF: GABORONE 1967

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED SUMMARY: GOB VETERINARY DEPARTMENT HAS
ANNOUNCED THAT BOTSWANA IS NOW COMPLETELY FREE OF FOOT AND MOUTH
DISEASE; HOWEVER, EEC HAS TO DATE AGREED TO RESUME IM-
PORTS FROM ONLY THE SOUTHERN AREA OF THE COUNTRY. GOB
WILL CONTINUE ITS EFFORTS TO REGAIN LOST SHARE OF
LUCRATIVE EEC MARKET THROUGH BEEF DIPLOMACY, PARTICULARLY
RENEGOTIATION OF LOME CONVENTION BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 1.
END SUMMARY.

2. GOB DECLARES BOTSWANA FREE OF FOOT AND MOUTH:
RADIO BOTSWANA AUGUST 7 BROADCAST GOB DEPARTMENT OF
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ANIMAL HEALTH ANNOUNCEMENT THAT FOOT AND MOUTH
DISEASE HAS BEEN ERADICATED IN NGAMILAND ENDING
ONE OF THE MOST SERIOUS FMD OUTBREAKS IN BOTSWANA
HISTORY. FMD OUTBREAK BEGAN IN NGAMILAND AND HAD
BEEN PARTICULARLY PERSISTENT IN THAT DISTRICT.
WITH ALL OF BOTSWANA NOW DECLARED FREE OF FMD,
GOB EFFORTS TO CONVINCE EEC TO RESUME BEEF IM-

PORTS AT PRE-FMD LEVELS WILL NO DOUBT BE REDOUBLED.

3. EEC AGREES TO ACCEPT BEEF FROM SOUTHERN AREA:
MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE LENYELETSE SERETSE ANNOUNCED
AT GABORONE TRADE FAIR (JULY 29) THAT EEC HAS AGREED
TO BEGIN IMPORTING BOTSWANA BEEF, BUT ONLY FROM A
LIMITED AREA OF SOUTHERN BOTSWANA. SERETSE TOLD
TRADE FAIR CROWD THAT EEC DECISION WOULD ACTUALLY DO
LITTLE TO RELIEVE BOTSWANA'S BEEF MARKETING PROBLEMS
BECAUSE MARKETABLE CATTLE IN SOUTHERN AREA CAN BE
HANDLED IN ONLY A FEW DAYS EACH MONTH BY BMC. HE
SAID THAT GOB IS PUZZLED AND DISAPPOINTED AT EEC
RELUCTANCE TO RESUME FULL SCALE BEEF IMPORTS DESPITE
GOB ASSURANCE THAT ALL CATTLE NOW BEING ACCEPTED BY
BMC ARE FREE OF FMD. BMC HAS ACCEPTED CATTLE FROM
ALL AREAS EAST OF NORTH/SOUTH RAILROAD SINCE MAY AND
WILL PRESUMABLY ACCEPT CATTLE FROM OTHER NORTHERN
AREAS SINCE ERADICATION OF FMD IN NGAMILAND
(PARA 1 ABOVE). SERETSE ACKNOWLEDGED, HOWEVER, THAT
THERE IS LITTLE POINT IN EXPANDING BMC OPERATIONS
UNLESS ADEQUATE FOREIGN MARKETS CAN BE ASSURED.

4. CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE OF EEC IMPORTS TO BOTSWANA'S
CATTLE INDUSTRY IS EMPHASIZED IN BMC ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 1977 JUST RECEIVED AT EMBASSY. OF THE 196,850
CATTLE SLAUGHTERED AT LOBATSE, 180,851 CARCASSES
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(92 PERCENT) WERE PROCESSED AS DE-BONED BEEF FOR EXPORT.
OF THIS PREDOMINANT SHARE OF BMC PRODUCTION DEVOTED
TO BONELESS BEEF, THE UK PURCHASED 61 PERCENT (16,821 TONS)
WHILE SOUTH AFRICA TOOK ONLY 21 PERCENT (TNIRR TONS). THE
EEC PREDOMINANCE IN BOTSWANA'S FOREIGN BEEF MARKET
WAS EVEN MORE MARKED WHEN MEASURED BY CASH SALES
IN PULA. UK ACCOUNTED FOR 61 PERCENT OF ALL CASH SALES
AND OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES ACCOUNTED FOR 8 PERCENT OF
CASH SALES. BY CONTRAST CASH SALES TO SOUTH AFRICA
MADE UP 19 PERCENT OF TOTAL WHILE CASH SALES TO THE REST OF
AFRICA ACCOUNTED FOR ONLY 8 PERCENT OF TOTAL. END UNCLASSIFIED

5. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

BEEF DIPLOMACY: EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DEPUTY SECRE-
TARY MPOTOKWANE TOLD US RECENTLY THAT PACE OF BEEF-
RELATED DIPLOMACY WILL REMAIN INTENSE IN COMING
MONTHS. DURING JULY MPOTOKWANE HIMSELF VISITED TWO
OTHER BEEF PRODUCING AFRICAN COUNTRIES, MADAGASCAR
AND KENYA, TO COORDINATE POSITIONS FOR CRUCIAL RE-
NEGOTIATIONS OF LOME CONVENTION SCHEDULED TO
BEGIN SEPTEMBER 1. ACCORDING TO MPOTOKWANE, RE-

NEGOTIATION OF LOME CONVENTION, WHICH ENABLES BOTSWANA BEEF TO BE SOLD IN EEC COUNTRIES, IS SO IMPORTANT THAT EXTAFF MINISTER MOGWE WILL ATTEND THESE TALKS RATHER THAN UNGA IF THE TWO MEETINGS CONFLICT.

6. BOTSWANA CANNED BEEF MAKES ITS DEBUT: DAILY NEWS ANNOUNCED JULY 27 THAT BMC HAD BEGUN PRODUCING CANNED BEEF, AND SALES OF PRODUCT BEGAN AT BMC TRADE FAIR STALL. CANNED BEEF FACTORY NOW PRODUCES 2000 TINS PER DAY BUT HOPES TO INCREASE PRODUCTION IN NEAR FUTURE IN EFFORT TO GIVE BOTSWANA ALTERNATIVES TO CANNED BEEF IMPORTED FROM SOUTH AFRICA.

7. COMMENT: TAKEN TOGETHER, BEEF DEVELOPMENTS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DESCRIBED ABOVE REPRESENT FIRST SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT SINCE OUTBREAK OF FMD OVER A YEAR AGO. NEVERTHELESS, BEEF EXPORTS AND PRICES AT BMC REMAIN WELL BELOW PRE-FMD LEVELS AND CATTLE OWNERS IN MANY OF THE MOST PRODUCTIVE AREAS OF BOTSWANA ARE STILL UNABLE TO MARKET BEEF AT ALL. WITH THE WORST OF THE FMD OUTBREAK NOW PAST, GOB WILL CONCENTRATE ITS ENERGIES ON RECLAIMING THE SHARE OF THE LUCRATIVE EEC BEEF MARKET WHICH WAS LOST WHEN THE DISEASE STRUCK. IN THIS CONNECTION, UPCOMING LOME CONVENTION RENEGOTIATIONS WILL BE REGARDED BY BOTSWANA AS CRUCIAL TEST OF EEC WILLINGNESS TO MAKE GOOD ON ITS COMMITMENT TO PARTICIPATE CONSTRUCTIVELY IN NORTH/SOUTH DIALOGUE.
NORLAND

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